



Sad news from Switch Performance

All good things must come to an end! And so it is that, after 3 years of exciting, playful and provocative live art, Switch Performance will close its (virtual) doors this year.

In this communiqué we'll outline the reasons for our decision, tell you a bit about what we're planning to do to preserve our legacy, and share our plans for the future.

Why we are wrapping up

At the start of this year Switch core artists Justin Allen and Ewelina Kolaczek independently reached the same conclusion – that Switch was no longer serving us as artists. It is a classic story: the thing you set out to create ends up ruling you. We were finding ourselves with more and more exciting projects and less and less time to focus on our own work.

This feeling was compounded by the tough arts funding climate. In February we received word from the Arts Council that, although our funding application for a year-long programme of work was very strong, we had not been successful in securing the funds. This seemed to be a mixture of bad luck and bad timing, but it reinforced our decision to move in a new direction.

Last but not least, our work seems to be moving apart. Justin is increasingly developing an integrated practice, in which art, sex, magic and the body come together to create dynamic, playful new forms and spaces. Meanwhile Ewelina is increasingly moving towards a more live installation-based practice, with new pieces like *Breath/e* taking her work down exciting new avenues.

What happens next?

We have done a lot over the last 3 years, and we don't want that to disappear. So we are working on a couple of projects in 2010 that will ensure a legacy for the work created by over 50 artists under the Switch banner.

my site | in space toolkit: we will produce an attractive, limited-edition toolkit that explores our flagship project, *my site | in space*. This will be both a document of what has been created during the 5 editions of this project, and a guide for artists and curators who want to take the project forward in exciting new directions.

The toolkit will be funded by Switch and will be offered free of charge to artists and curators excited about doing something new with the material. In addition the *my site | in space* guide will be available to download online, as a free resource for others to use.

Switch documentation: alongside the toolkit we will update the Switch website with more documentation, so that it becomes as complete as possible a record of the work made with and by Switch. While we realise that documentation can never capture the excitement of a live moment, we hope that the website remains a valuable record and resource for the future.

We will work on both these legacy projects in 2010, and launch them later in the year.

Staying in touch

Justin and Ewelina will each develop new websites that reflect the evolution of our solo practice. To support this, we invite you to stay on our mailing lists, so you can receive updates from each of us about our solo work. As a subscriber you will of course have the choice about which lists you stay on and which ones you leave. We hope you'll stay with both of us as we "go solo".

In addition, we strongly encourage you to stay in touch with associate artists Mark Butcher, Robin Dingemans and Helen Schoene by subscribing to their mailing lists. You will find these at:

www.instructionsfor.com (Mark)

www.robindingemans.com (Robin)

www.wurmpea.com (Helen)

Getting personal

We'd like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who's been involved with Switch over the past 3 years: artists, curators, mentors, audiences, supporters and partners. You were the blood that pumped through the company's veins and we couldn't have done any of this without you. Thank you for your time, your energy, your creativity and your support. It meant a lot, and we hope that the work inspired you as much as it did us, and that you had as much fun as we did.

We hope that we've anticipated any questions you might have about our decision, but please don't hesitate to email info@switchperformance.co.uk if there's anything you want to talk to us about. We will continue to use this mailing list for the next few months, to keep you informed about the legacy projects we mentioned above. And when the time comes, you will be getting messages from Justin Allen and Ewelina Kolaczek as we each embark on the next phase of our creative journeys.